



Attorney General Steve Carter  
Working for Justice in Indiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Indiana Attorney General and The Humane Society of the United States Announce Animal Fighting Reward Program**

(June 6, 2008) — Attorney General Steve Carter and The Humane Society of the United States have teamed up to combat cockfighting and dogfighting in Indiana. At two press conferences held today in Tippecanoe and Lake Counties, they announced that The HSUS is offering up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person involved in illegal animal fighting.

Anne Sterling, Indiana state director for The HSUS spoke on behalf of the national animal protection organization. Also taking part in the press conferences were Tippecanoe County Animal Control Officer April Keck, Lake County Sheriff Roy Dominguez and Lake County Prosecuting Attorney Bernard Carter.

“Animal fighting is a cruel and violent crime in which the victims have no voice,” Carter said. “I am pleased to lend my support to this reward program that will help protect animals across Indiana and punish those who abuse them for profit.”

Dogfighting and cockfighting are both Class D felonies in Indiana, punishable by six months to three years of imprisonment and/or a maximum \$10,000 fine.

“The people of Indiana are fortunate to have a champion against animal fighting in Attorney General Carter,” Sterling said. “The Humane Society of the United States is proud to partner with him on raising awareness of this important program that can help our local prosecutors put animal fighters behind bars.”

### **Animal Fighting Reward Program Instructions:**

- If you have information about illegal animal fighting, contact your local police department or animal control agency. If you wish to remain anonymous, you must inform the police officer you speak to. The HSUS protects the identity of anyone who contacts us with information about illegal animal fighting.
- If the suspected animal fighter is convicted, ask the law enforcement agency involved in the case to write a letter to The HSUS.
- The letter should state that your tip helped lead to the arrest and prosecution of the convicted animal fighter and should be mailed or faxed as follows:

Animal Fighting Reward Program  
C/O Ann Chynoweth  
The Humane Society of the United States  
2100 L St. NW

Washington, DC 20037  
FAX: 301-721-6414

**About Dogfighting:**

- Dogfighting is a highly organized criminal industry; more than 250,000 dogs are placed in dogfighting pits each year.
- The HSUS estimates that 40,000 people are involved in organized dogfighting and an additional 100,000 are street-level fighters.
- A Chicago Police Department study showed that 65 percent of people charged with animal abuse crimes — including dogfighting — were also charged with violent crimes against people.

**About Cockfighting:**

- Tens of thousands of people are involved in cockfighting nationwide.
- Common cockfighting practices include breeding birds for viciousness, drugging them to heighten aggression, and fitting their legs with razor-sharp knives or gaffs resembling ice picks.
- Law enforcement raids across the country have revealed that cockfights, which are frequently attended by children, often involve gambling and — as a result of the large amount of cash present — firearms and other weapons are also often present.
- Law enforcement officials have documented a strong connection between cockfighting and the distribution of illegal drugs.
- Breeding and transporting fighting roosters for cockfighting is implicated in the spread of diseases such as Exotic Newcastle Disease, which can decimate the poultry industry.

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*The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 10.5 million Americans, or one of every 30. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education, and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the web at [humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org).*